

Message Text

SECRET

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11

ACTION NEA-10

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R 161330Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6385

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MUSQAT

AMEMBASSY DOHA

S E C R E T SANA 2612

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR AU

YEJRSVS# SA, KU, UR, EG

SUBJECT: ASNAJ ON PDRY, SOVIETS, AND MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT

1. IN MEETING TODAY WITH AMBASSADORS SCOTES AND AKINS (WHO VISITING YEMEN PRIVATELY) YARG FONMIN ASNAJ SAID THAT SENIOR YARG OFFICIAL WHO IN CONTACT WITH PDRY LEADERSHIP HAD REPORTED DISTURBING NEWS THAT KUWAIT URGING PDRY NOT RPT NOT TO LET SAUDIS TIE AID TO INTERNAL OR FOREIGN POLICY CHANGES OF PDRY. KUWAITIS COUNSELED PDRY TO GET SAUDIS TO GIVE AID WHILE LEAVING FUTURE COURSE OPEN TO WHATEVER EVOLUTION MIGHT THEN FOLLOW.

2. ASNAJ STATED HE CONCERNED THAT THIS KUWAITI ADVICE UNDERCUTS SAUDIS AND HARDENS INTRANSIGENT ELEMENTS WITHIN PDRY. ASNAJ SAID MOST IMPORTANT FOR SAUDIS TO INSIST ON REAL RATHER THAN COSMETIC CHANGES IN PDRY POLICIES PRIOR TO PROVIDING BENEFITS WHICH ADENI REGIME NEEDS SO BADLY.

3. ASNAJ ALSO QUOTED HIGHLY PLACED PDRY SOURCE AS

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SAYING SOUTHERN INTRANSIGANCE WAS CLEARLY BENEFIT

TO HAMDI IN MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH SAUDIS AND HIGH LEVELS OF FOREIGN AID. SOURCE PROCEEDED TO ASK IF YARG WOULDN'T PREFER RADICAL PDRY? ASNAJ SAID HE FLATLY REJECTED SUCH A NOTION, AND TOLD PDRY AND PDRY SOURCE THAT HE WELCOMED SUADI EFFORTS IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH PDRY AND FOR SAKE OF CHANGE IN SOUTH, ACCEPT DIVERSION OF "PART" OF SAUDI AID TO SANA REGIME.

4. ASNAJ SAID HE HAD PASSED ON ABOVE TO ASHRAF MARWAN DURING LATTER'S VISIT HERE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY. HE AND HAMDI ALSO PASSED ON ORAL MESSAGE TO SADAT CONCERNING YARG REACTION TO INTERIM AGREEMENT. YARG IS "COMPLETELY BEHIND SADAT" SAID ASNAJ, "FOR THE MOMENT," BUT IS ALSO FRANKLY CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF LACK OF MOVEMENT ON SYRIAN FRONT. MARWAN WAS TOLD THAT FROM YARG SOUNDINGS IN OTHER ARAB CAPITALS, THIS REFLECTED GENERAL VIEW AND THAT EGYPTIANS SHOULD NOT THEREFORE MIND "TEASING" AND "PINPRICKS" OF PRESS ATTACKS ON SETTLEMENT, BUT SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON FOLLOW-THROUGH AND NEXT STEPS IN ORDER TO UNDERMINE ARAB RADICALS AND SOVIETS.

5. SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN TO SEE ASNAJ--"FOR TWO HOURS DURING RAMADAN FAST", SAID ASJAN, "I ALMOST FAINTED"--AND MADE STRONG EFFORT TO DOWNPLAY SINAI AGREEMENT, CHARGING THAT IT LET DOWN SYRIANS AND MADE USG VIRTUAL "OCCUPIER" OF SINAI. ASNAJ SAID HE TOLD SOVIET YARG NOT PREPARED TO ACCEPT THIS ACCOUNT, AND ASKED FOR SOVIET SUGGESTIONS ON WHAT TO DO IN MIDDLE EAST. AMBASSADOR SAID GENEVA CONFERENCE FOR ALL PARTIES WAS THE ANSWER. ASNAJ DEMURRED.

6. SOVIET AMBASSADOR ALSO ASKED ABOUT DATES FOR HAMDI VISIT TO MOSCOW. ASNAG SAID BLUNTLY THAT YARG FOREIGN MINISTRY OPPOSED TRIP AT ANY TIME IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE. MOST IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIP FOR HAMDI GOVERNMENT WAS WITH SAUDIS, SAID ASNAJ, AND MOSCOW TRIP WOULD DAMAGE THIS RELATIONSHIP, WHICH BOTH EXCELLENT AND IMPROVING.

7. COMMENT: SOVIET AMBASSADOR IS MAN OF LITTLE SKILL AND GREAT PERSONAL INSENSITIVITY. HE VERGES ON BEING US ASSET. STILL, HE HAS MANAGED TO IMPRESS ON ASNAJ THAT MODERATE
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ARABS--INCLUDING HAMDI GOVERNMENT--ARE TAKING GREAT RISKS IN SUPPORTING LATEST SETTLEMENT MOVES. ASNAJ SEES SOVIETS WAITING IN WINGS, BOTH HERE AND IN EGYPT, WAITING TO EXPLOIT USG FAILURES IN HIDDLE EAST. HAMDI BELIEVES SOVS CONTINUE TO HAVE CONSIDERABLE LEVERAGE IN AREA OF ARMS SUPPLY, PARTICULARLY IF USG DOES NOT FIND IT POSSIBLE TO ARM "EGYPT AND JORDAN".

8. IT ALSO NOTEWORTHY THAT ASNAJ HAS CLEARLY SIGNALLED
DESIRE FOR CHANGE IN PDRY EVEN AT EXPENSE OF DIVERSION OF
SOME AID TO ADEN. HAMDI GOVT IS NOT RPT NOT STATUS
QUO STATE ALTHOUGH BENEFITS OF BEING BUFFER ARE REAL AND
RECOGNIZED FOR THIS SANA REGIME. HE IS AT SAME TIME
CONCERNED THAT NO RPT NO AID GO TO PDRY WITHOUT REAL
CHANGES AND SEES SAUDIS AS KEY TO PDRY MODERATION.
SCOTES

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